The Sarajevo Peace Camp here we come!

Four young people have been chosen to attend a peace camp under a MAW bursary scheme.

The camp is part of the Sarajevo Peace Event 2014, held in remembrance of the First World War which was triggered 100 years ago in Sarajevo.

The event has been organised by peace groups across Europe and will include workshops, films and exhibitions. Other activities will include nonviolence training, seminars on reconciliation, cultural activities and sport.

Maddy Ridgetley, one of the four selected, said: “It will be a great chance to meet like-minded people who are also passionate about caring for our world.”

Becky Garnault and Hannah Larn, both students at Liverpool University, founded a society there to support the Aegis Trust, campaigning for the prevention of genocide. Both have strong interests in human rights and conflict resolution and are keen to spread MAW’s message in universities and schools.

Jen Harrison, a photographer and graduate in peace studies, works with refugees and asylum seekers and volunteers with the Red Cross as a school speaker.

Having first considered a career in the army, she now promotes nonviolence and a culture of peace through education and the media.

After attending the event, the four will write and blog about their experiences for the MAW membership.

A reminder that the award-winning author Michael Morpurgo will deliver the annual MAW Remembrance Day Lecture on Sunday, November 9, at 3pm at the Imperial War Museum, London. Put the date in your diaries and plan to get to the IWM early - this will be a very popular talk.

Talks on war - and peace

Keynote speakers are being lined up for the prestigious MAW Peace History Conference on Saturday, October 11.

The day-long event, which will take place at the Imperial War Museum in London, will offer an array of fascinating talks from distinguished members of the peace and academic communities.

Cyril Pearce has accepted our invitation to give an overview of conscientious objectors and broader war resistance. We are also looking forward to hearing from John Gittings - who will speak about “Interpreting World War One” and take a critical look at HOW it is being commemorated.

By October we will all have witnessed the first official events and he will tailor his talk to highlight “gaps” in the official picture - these could well include missed opportunities to prevent war and dissent.

Ingrid Sharp of Leeds University will speak on “Challenging the war machine: German peace activism during the First World War.” Clive Barrett will talk about the origins of the Fellowship of Reconciliation which is in its centenary year.

We are also working with Bethan Clark of Speaking in Tongues Theatre Company - a European group based in London and Luxembourg - to create a short drama involving young people in telling the story of the Women's International Congress in The Hague in 1915.

Bookmark our website: www.abolishwar.org.uk
Follow us on Facebook: www.facebook.com/abolishwar
For electronic versions of the newsletter email Gillian Hurle, gill.hurle@abolishwar.org.uk - forward it to your contacts!
Diary Dates

● June 14, (Saturday), Friends Meeting House, Euston, London, 10.30am - 4.30pm. Resisting the Drone Wars - a free event from the Drone Campaign Network. www.dronecampaignnetwork.org.uk

● July 2 (Wednesday) Conway Hall, Red Lion Square, London, 8pm. Abolishing War – an open meeting on with David Swanson, author, journalist and inspiration behind the World Beyond War movement in the US. Organised by London CND and part of a tour organised by MAW and Veterans for Peace. david.lrcnd@cnuk.org; Tel 020-7607 2302.

● July 4 (Friday), Menwith Hill, near Harrogate, 5-9pm. The annual Independence FROM America demonstration - with the 2014 theme of Recycle the Base. Contact CAAB for more details, tel 01423 884076 or see www.caab.org.uk

● August 4 (Monday) Silent vigil to mark the centenary of the outbreak of World War One, 12 – 2pm on the steps of St Martin-in-the-Fields, Trafalgar Square, London. The message will be ‘No More War.’ Organise a similar vigil in your town centre or village.

● August 9 (Saturday) Wool Against Weapons - a seven-mile long peace scarf to be unfurled between Burghfield and Aldermaston AWEs http://www.woolagainstweapons.co.uk

MAW book offers new way to remember

WE WILL REMEMBER THEM

services, reflections,
prayers, songs and readings,
for Remembrance Sunday

MAW’s updated booklet ‘We Will Remember Them’ - a resource for parish clergy, teachers and youth leaders charged with devising Remembrance services - is now available to buy. The booklet is a collection of reflections, prayers, songs and readings, all suitable for use in a variety of settings.

MAW committee member Sue Dowell, who led the project to update the booklet with help from supporter Bob Gilmurray, says: “How should we remember those who died in war? Many people - from peace activists to retired military personnel - ask this question. “We Will Remember Them” sets out to address this concern.

“The question of how and who we remember has taken on a renewed urgency as people across the country prepare to commemorate the centenary of the start of WWI this coming August.”

The beautiful cover and back design for the book, which has a forward by author Michael Morpurgo, was drawn by distinguished cartoonist and illustrator Angela Martin.

The booklet is priced at £3, plus postage. Order via the MAW website (http://www.abolishwar.org.uk) or from Sally Reynolds, 1 Thesiger Road, Abingdon, OX14 2DY.

Marshall Islands v nuclear weapons

The tiny Pacific nation of the Marshall Islands is showing what can be done if one has courage and knows how to use the machinery of the United Nations and its Court of Justice.

The islands were used for 67 United States nuclear tests after WWII with lasting health and environmentally damaging consequences.

Now the islands are taking the nine nuclear weapons countries to the International Court accusing them of flagrant violations of law.

The crux of the issue is that the nuclear weapons states are “modernising” nuclear weapons in violation of the obligation they have to negotiate their elimination. It’s an example of Law not War - which we need to make progress.

Take action: Email your MP: http://www.theyworkforyou.com
Families celebrate the ones who said “No”

MAW committee members were among the hundreds of people who attended the Conscientious Objectors’ ceremony in Tavistock Square, London, on a beautifully sunny May 15.

There have been many COs’ days since 1994 when Sir Michael Tippett, also a CO, dedicated an inscribed stone in Tavistock Square to all of them everywhere. The final words on the inscription are “their foresight and courage give us hope”.

This year was made particularly special due to the presence of nearly 200 relations of some 66 WWI COs. Some of those men refused for religious reasons, some because they were absolute pacifists, some for political conviction. Some were willing to do alternative service but many were not and suffered greatly as a consequence.

It was a moving day filled with sunshine. A choir from a local school, Maria Fidelis, sang MAW committee member Sue Gilmurray’s song “The Ones Who Said No”.

There were several speakers: Sam Walton from the Quakers and Mary Dobbing and Lord Maxton who spoke about their fathers and grandfathers. Perhaps the most unusual contribution came from Christine Schweitzer from the German peace movement and War Resisters International. She said that the law in Germany, pre 1914, did allow for exemption from military service for reasons of conscience but very few applied. Those given it went to prison or to a lunatic asylum. The most moving part of the afternoon was the procession of daughters, sons and grandchildren, all making brief statements about their WW1 CO relations and laying a flower on the memorial stone.

**Take Action:** Next year – 2015 - May 15 will fall on a Friday. Put the date in your diaries and start planning a local CO event now.

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**How war can make the case against war**

*War Against War!*

by Ernest Friedrich

This 230-page book of text and shocking photographs first came out in 1924 and has now been republished, thanks to the generosity of Friedrich’s grandson, Tommy Spree, who still runs the anti-war museum in Berlin.

Friedrich was a powerful anti-war campaigner who had to escape from Berlin when Hitler came to power. The book is a powerful indictment of war and a passionate call for it to be abolished. It is full of photos and captions in German, French, English and Dutch.

The new edition has a foreword by Bruce Kent, past-President of the IPB and current MAW vice-president. He says: “Given the amount of nostalgia and bogus glory now promoted about the 1914-1918 war this edition could not have come at a better time. It is ideal for helping those who have never had to experience it, to understand the reality of war.”


As well as being stocked by MAW War Against War will be available from Housmans (5 Caledonian Road London N1) which will also be the venue for an official book launch on Wednesday, June 18 from 7pm. All are welcome.

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**Abolish War**

The next edition of *Abolish War* will be published on September 15 – send your news and views to helenriley@abolishwar.org.uk

**ON SONG:** MAW is happy to report that the Edinburgh-based choir, *Protest in Harmony*, is currently practising Sue Gilmurray’s song, “The Ones Who Said No” from the MAW Songs for 2014 project which offers people the chance to sing peace songs from a choice of 14. (audio extracts can be heard at https://soundcloud.com/songsfor2014)

Sue (pictured left) is still busy emailing choirs to tell them about the exciting project. Contact her for more details at suegilmurray@icloud.com
Tell politicians: ‘End the wars’

Dear Editor,

Re MAW’s Spring Newsletter (issue 27) I agree that Michael Morpurgo is not alone in his concern for the tone of many of this year’s WW1 Centenary events.

How many BBC histories of this time are a spin-free zone? Those of us who sat through ‘Britain’s Great War’ were never going to see Jeremy Paxman dance for joy, like the crowds who celebrated the end of the Great War in 1918.

Paxman’s choice as presenter gave him a TV pulpit for a prejudiced view of conscientious objectors. By his own report a million men pleaded against conscription and by 1916 this included the Richmond 16, especially Norman Gaudie and while many ‘consies’ settled for hospital duties even rescue work at the front, the Richmond 16 would have none of it.

We learnt from Paxman that, with the war in stalemate, the military ordered the 16 to France where they were condemned to death by firing squad, a sentence confirmed by an Officer who then commuted it to 10 years of penal servitude.

Paxman condemned the cruelty of such treatment - yet insulted Gaudie and colleagues as “cranks.”

To be fair to Paxman, there was support for the Bishop of Salisbury’s comment about the message of the war memorials as a “warning to future generations”.

With still thousands of hours of television still scheduled to be broadcast on the Great War, I hope my letter will be taken as a warning to those of us of working for peace to put forward our view that to abolish war is the greatest service our politicians and their constituents can perform.

Tom Cuthbert

The Movement for the Abolition of War – join us, or renew your membership

We aim to create a world where war is no longer seen as a way to solve a problem; where it has ceased to be an option; where conflict resolution means resolution. Working through education and dialogue, nationally and locally, we have the tools, skills and laws that we need, but we also need you - ordinary people can help us realise our goal, the abolition of war.

MAW members and affiliated groups: unless you are a life member, or joined after March 2013, your membership subscription for 2014 was due in November 2013.

Send completed form (and cheque if applicable) to: Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, LONDON N4 1EJ

Membership application / renewal

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Type of membership (please tick):

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OR Please send me a standing order form

Abolish War is published by the Movement for the Abolition of War, 11 Venetia Road, London N4 1EJ.